

Dear Lawmakers,

My name is Aurelia Aleman, but everyone calls me Ginger. I want to start by thanking you for your time with this *serious* matter concerning the lives of our youth, who can be, (*and some of those who are*) serving an extreme sentence for their juvenile crimes. When most of us hear the word juvenile, we think immature, young, or ignorance. Merriam Webster's dictionary defines juvenile as;

*a : physiologically immature or undeveloped : young; relating to, characteristic of, or suitable for children or young people but, most importantly, reflecting psychological or intellectual immaturity : childish.*

That is exactly what bill ~~55~~46, an act concerning sentence modification for juveniles, understands and Mr. Marcus Price, as well, has come to realize. Mr. Marcus Price inmate 247953, was charged with assault in the first degree with a firearm at the age of 16 and was given the MAXIMUM sentence of 20 YEARS and on top of that a SENTENCE ENHANCER OF 5 YEARS along with an ADDITIONAL 6 YEARS CONSECUTIVE, for another charge TOTALING 31 YEARS. As you know, being that this is an assault charge he is not eligible to even have his file reviewed until he has reached a minimum of 85% of his time and even then parole is not guaranteed. I am by no means saying that his adolescent mistake was not worth being punished for and nor is Mr. Price, however, the extent of his punishment is where we have concern. Mr. Marcus Price will be turning 32 years of age on April 2, 2012 and he remains an obedient and rehabilitated (now adult) inmate at MacDougal CI.

Mr. Marcus Price was a child without any supervision or real structure or guidance. A child from a family of 7, he could not rely on his substance abused mother or father for positive life choices. His older sister tried to do the best she could for her younger brothers, but she had two young children of her own. As Marcus Price states in his letter to lawmakers, that I will be reading, he was a child looking for acceptance and guidance from somewhere and the "streets" opened their arms the widest and he unfortunately got sucked in to the streets.

Erickson is a well respected-psychosocial developmental theorist, who explains that in adolescence, (11-20 years old), the life stage of development is identity vs role confusion. Adolescents try to develop a sense of who they are and where they are going in life and they can become confused on their identity. As a Social Work major, minoring in psychology, at Southern Connecticut State University, I strongly believe in Erickson's stages of development and apply them to the stipulations of our less than fortunate citizens in our society who have conflicting lives due to absent parenting or any other unfortunate circumstances, therefore, I advocate for their lives of injustices that they were born into.

I am grateful that there are individuals out there that can empathize with the excessive sentencing that some of our youth received and are still serving a sentence for. In Mr. Price's case, we were informed that the state's attorney made it clear that she would not consider a sentence modification and it would be a waste of time to apply. So, my question is; isn't the justice system responsible for ALL citizens to receive an opportunity for justice even if it concerns rehabilitation? Justice should be served for victims of juvenile crimes, but with consideration to the main fact that the juvenile is an adolescent and that should be taken into

consideration. 31 years can be considered by many to be a lifetime and since the individual will already be punished for the rest of their life with a label of a felon, many opportunities are already being limited, therefore allowing the victim to still receive adequate justice, so why are they serving so many years to pay their debt to society without the chance of even having their file reviewed at some point prior to their current parole eligibility date, especially when they have maintained an obedient role as an inmate for a number of years, like Mr. Marcus Price!

The potential of freedom being allotted sooner for individuals like Mr. Price, if this bill is enacted, will not only be the humane thing to do, but, it will also give an opportunity to many in his same situation the chance to prove their rehabilitation, brain growth and development.

Thank you again for your time concerning my matters.

Sincerely,

Aurelia "Ginger" Aleman

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